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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/618,473	07/11/2003	Xiaowei Deng	TI-33969	5307

23494 7590 09/27/2006

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EXAMINER

NGUYEN, VAN THU T

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2824

DATE MAILED: 09/27/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/618,473	Applicant(s) DENG ET AL.	
	Examiner VanThu Nguyen	Art Unit 2824	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 August 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7,9 and 11-25 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 19-22 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7,9 and 23 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 11-12, 14-17, 24-25 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 13 and 18 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 12/05/2005 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Response to Amendment

1. This Office Action is in response to Amendment filed on 08/23/2006.
2. Claims 1-7, 9, 11-25 are pending. Claims 1-7, 9, 11-18, 23-25 are present for examination. Claims 8, 10 are cancelled. Claims 19-22 are withdrawn from further consideration. Applicants are requested to cancel claims 19-22 in the next response.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 11-12, 14-17, 24-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over P.G. Pub. No. 2003/0043680 to Akiba et al. (Akiba).

Regarding claims 11-12, Akiba discloses, in FIG. 13, a semiconductor memory device having address input circuit with an output line (e.g. element 65 having input A0 and output AB0), said address input circuit comprising a control circuitry (comprising either transistors 66-68; 67-68; 70-71, 67-68 and 70-71; or all); and an intervention circuit (transistor 69) instantiated within the control circuitry, adapted to hold the output line at a desired state while control circuitry preceding the intervention circuit is powered down with a power switch (66) having a control signal input (input signal PD).

Akiba does not disclose the element 65 is a word line driver, but address input circuit.

However, it would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art to use the address input circuit disclosed in Akiba as a word line driver since it has been held that a recitation with respect to the manner in which a claimed apparatus is intended to be employed does not differentiate the claimed apparatus from a prior art apparatus satisfying the claimed structure limitations. Ex. Parte Masham, F.2d USPQ F.2d 1647 (1987).

Regarding claims 14-17, 24-25, Akiba also discloses that the intervention circuit is a transistor; the transistor 69 is between the driver transistor pair 67-68 and 70-71; transistor 69 is between output line AB0 and driver 66-68; signal PD controls both driver 66-68 and transistor 69; driver 66-68 is substantially equivalent to a pre-driver circuit; PD signal can also be replaced as sleep mode signal.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 1-7, 9, 23 are allowed.

6. Claims 13 and 18 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

The prior art made of record and considered pertinent to the applicant's disclosure does not teach or suggest the claimed invention having the following limitations, in combination with the remaining claimed limitations:

- As in claim 13: wherein the intervention circuit comprises a resistor; or

- As in claim 18: wherein the intervention circuit is coupled to a first assertion signal source, and second assertion signal source is coupled to the driver circuitry.

Response to Arguments

7. Applicant's arguments, filed on 08/23/2006, with respect to the rejection(s) of claims 1 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made as above.

Conclusion

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to VanThu Nguyen whose telephone number is (571) 272-1881. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 9:00am-5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Richard Elms can be reached on (571) 272-1869. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Art Unit: 2824

September 20, 2006

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "VanThu Nguyen", with a stylized, flowing script.

VanThu Nguyen
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2824